There was by this time no shortage of overt acts to determine the issue. On 21st March, the same day as Wilson issued his summons for a special session of Congress, another American vessel, the *S.S. Healdton*, was torpedoed and sunk with a loss of seven lives. The final problem which the President had to decide was whether to ask Congress to sanction a Declaration of War, or to put it to them that a state of war already existed, and ask them to sanction the necessary measures for carrying it on. House advised the second course, which Wilson in the end adopted.

On 2nd April, 1917, the President addressed the special session of Congress, and declared :—

" With a profound sense of the solemn and tragical character of the step I am taking, and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States ; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defence, but also to exert all its power and employ

Wilson's declaration:

a state of war exists

all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the War."

' Thus at last, more than 2^ years after the World War broke out, Germany succeeded in forcing the United States to take sides against her. It must be conceded that the States had clung to their neutrality with almost incredible patience and persistence. Had